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WRECK AND RESCUE.

THE LIFE AND LABORS

OF

JOHN BYRNE,

LAY MISSIONARY TO SEAMEN IN NEW YORK.

BY THE

REV. B. S. HUNTINGTON,

CANON OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, LONDON, C. W., AND FORMERLY PASTOR OF THE EPISCOPAL FLOATING CHURCH OF NEW YORK.

"Footprints which perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother
Seeing, may take heart again."

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WRECK AND RESCUE.

CHAPTER I.

Parentage. — Home Influence. —Enlistment in the Army. — Life in India. — Intemperance. — Remarkable Providences. — Conversion. — 1818 to 1857.

"Amazing grace, immense and free;
For O, my God, it found out me!"

IT is related of a certain martyr, that in the moment of dying, he gave the sign of his faith by stretching out his arms and falling to the earth in the form of a cross.

The life of faith recorded in this biography has expressed this sacred sign still more impressively. Its example and influence proclaim the power of the cross and its divine reality.

It is with this end in view, and not to eulogize the man, that this volume is written.

His remarkable conversion and consecration have left "footprints on the sands of

time," and are commended to the attention of the reader, as

> "Footprints which perhaps another,
> Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
> Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother
> Seeing, may take heart again."

JOHN BYRNE was born in Killarney, near the Lakes of Killarney, in the south of Ireland, in 1818. His parents were Edward Byrne, of Scotch descent — a man of commanding appearance, for several years church-warden of the parish, superintendent of the county prison, and janitor of the court — and Ann O'Sullivan Byrne, said to have been a distant relation to Daniel O'Connell.

Their eleven children, of whom John was the youngest, were religiously brought up in the faith of the Church of England, and their family piety was much like that described by the poet Burns in his "Cotter's Saturday Night," — the Saturday preparation leaving no secular cares to interfere with the sacred duties of the Lord's day.

> "The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
> They round the ingle form a circle wide,

The sire turns o'er with patriarchal grace
The big ha' Bible, once his father's pride.

"Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal king,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays,
Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing
That thus they all shall meet in future days."

The children walked two and two in procession to the parish church, and were assembled at home on Sunday afternoons, as a family Bible class, each reading a verse in turn. So thorough was this instruction (says one of the daughters), that for years after she could remember the place and connection of almost any passage of Scripture.

As John grew up he became a favorite with soldiers stationed at Killarney, who were sometimes at his father's house.

The music, songs, parades, and apparent joyousness of a soldier's life were very captivating to a boy of his temperament.

His father endeavored earnestly to discourage these inclinations, but John persisted and at last ran from home, made his way to Dublin, and enlisted in the army. His father bought him off and brought him home, where he remained for a time, assist-

ing his father in the prison accounts, and was commended for their neatness and accuracy. But his desire for military life was incurable. He ran from home the second time and was again bought off, and at last a third time, when he was left to the bent of his disposition, and the protecting care of Providence. He never saw his parents after this. His mother's funeral, and his father's a few years later, were largely attended, — even Roman Catholic families sending their carriages, according to the custom of the country, as a mark of respect, and the poor mourning the loss of sympathizing friends and benefactors.

The next scene in his history is a dark one, but the events that followed it will encourage Christian parents never to despair of any son, however wayward his career, who is followed and confronted as was John Byrne, on every brink of ruin, by the memory of such influences and associations as hallowed his childhood's home.

Having enlisted in the army, he left the country soon afterwards to join the British troops then in India. He arrived there in

1838, after a narrow escape from shipwreck near the Cape of Good Hope. This was followed by a course of sin and suffering, of which he says : —

"I soon got into the company of the drunkard and the infidel, and was a poor, wretched man. My officers turned against me, and the guard-room and the dark cell were often my portion."

In sober moments, as the natural results of his early religious training, he was much esteemed by his associates for generosity, fidelity in duty, and scrupulous honesty. His distressing mortification often awakened the sympathy of his officers. He was repeatedly promoted for general good conduct, and but for intemperance might have risen to a high position ; yet no bitterness of remorse, or force of resolution, availed anything against his besetting temptation. It came upon him like a giant.

Intemperance in his case may have been a *disease*. A consequence perhaps of the occasional temperate use of alcoholic drinks in his father's house, — a practice very common at that time in pious families, but O !

what life-long sorrow might be spared both parents and children, in many such cases, by total abstinence, *for children's sake*, from all that can intoxicate.

Disgraced in the eyes of his companions, often without shoes or hat, his resolutions made only to be broken, and the counsels and hopes of pious parents ever haunting his memory, existence became intolerable.

"Being brought so low, that respectable young men would not keep my company, and while reflecting on the past, especially what sorrow I had caused my poor father, I came to the determination of putting an end to my life. I left the barracks as the sun was fast sinking in the west, resolved soon to sleep beneath the ocean wave. I came to the shore, took off my clothes, and went out as far as I could with my head above water. O, the terror that then seized upon me. My conscience whispered, suppose there is a hell! I was struck with the dread of dying, and fear of judgment, and hurriedly retraced my steps. I kneeled down, and prayed God, if there was a God, to have mercy upon me."

This was followed by a reformation which lasted for some months.

"I frequently went to hear the missionaries preach, and thought I was all right now. But alas! I now found my deceitful heart was only betraying me. The hour of temptation came. I was carried away like smoke."

After this his path was downward. We hear no more for a long time of awakenings, reformations, and relapses. He seemed to have reached the dead level of hardened indifference.

"For ten years I neither feared God nor man."

"Reprobate silver shall men call them; for God hath forsaken them."

But God had not forsaken him; and it was just this very idea of Divine patience, as suggested by frequent narrow escapes, that served more than anything else to awaken sensibility.

Cholera visited the place. Thirty and forty were dying daily.

"I fell asleep on the steps of a tank. If my foot had slipped, nothing would have

saved me. I went out into the yard and wept. I resolved again to seek God's help, and signed the temperance pledge."

This was followed by two years of sobriety, but the need of an inward change was revealed to him by a trivial occurrence.

"I volunteered to go to China to fight, but after sailing as far as Singapore we were countermanded and ordered back. I did not like this, and in a fit of anger returned again to the intoxicating cup."

"One evening after being released from imprisonment for misconduct, a letter was handed me which I saw by the postmark was from home. I opened that letter with trembling hand, and soon learned that my dear father was no more, and that the last thing which he did before his death was to ask my sister to raise him up in bed that he might once more pray for his wretched son. 'O Lord, I have one poor wandering child in the far distant East. Have mercy upon him and save his soul.' He fell back and died. I closed the letter and went to weep in secret."

He had now reached a solemn crisis, and

was determined on some extreme measures of reform.

"Having now completed twelve years in the Queen's service, I obtained my discharge and got employment in a school connected with the London mission."

This, however, was of short continuance, and he very soon left the country.

Thus ends his life in India.

He returned to Ireland in 1851. Thirteen years had made sad changes. But one sister remained at home.

"I was sad and lonely and determined to sail for America."

The next scenes in this conflict with temptation are especially affecting, as so immediately succeeding his father's prayer, and illustrating the soul's helpless dependence on Divine grace.

On arriving in New York he was kindly received by a sister, but repaid her kindness with ingratitude.

"I was enticed to the theatre and the rum shop, was often arrested by the police for intemperance, and oft found myself in the city prison."

As the drenching of the sacrifice on Mount Carmel the second time, and the third time, made more wonderful the miracle of fire, so this deplorable extremity of guilt and wretchedness, whether we call it willful sin or helpless captivity, made more wonderful the "miracle of grace" which at last found its way to his rescue, in answer to his dying father's prayer, through the following remarkable providences: —

"I went to Philadelphia to see a brother who was living there."

That brother would not harbor him. Thus an outcast from man and seemingly *given up* of God, he was led to visit the Seaman's Chapel, and to his surprise heard this text announced: —

"*How can I give thee up?*"

It seemed the voice of God to himself.

"I wept like a child while the man of God showed the love of our kind heavenly Father, and his long-suffering towards sinners, and was almost resolved to go to Him at once and give up all for His service."

In February, 1854, he entered the navy, and in July following sailed for the Pacific.

"Four days out from Rio Janeiro we were overtaken by a storm. The waves rose mountain high, the thunders rolled, and the lightnings played. In the twinkling of an eye our mizzen-mast went by the board, and shortly afterwards our mainmast. The signal gun proclaimed distress. Terror was in every countenance. But these things did not trouble me; my past sins rushed up before me. God's gracious Spirit resisted — His long-suffering provoked — well; I'm damned forever; and justly too.—The Lord called and I would not obey. My sainted father's last prayer came up to my view, and I saw his raised hands praying even in death for his wandering child. I cried to God for Jesus' sake to save me. We were delivered from death."

After this; *Bodily affliction.* "I was seized with inflammatory rheumatism which deprived me of the use of my hands and my feet, and so racked my whole body with pain that I often wept as I lay on the deck. I continued in this state for ten months."

At Honolulu he had a very narrow escape, having fallen while intoxicated over a spare

mast near the gangway of the ship. "I would certainly have been killed had not one of the men seized hold of me. My poor father's last prayer for me came more forcibly to my mind than ever, and as I leaned over the side of the ship, I wept where none could see me but He who despiseth not the tears of the contrite."

At the Sandwich Islands Rev. Mr. Damon came on board. "I asked him for a Testament." "The more I read, the more I felt condemned. I roamed about the deck. I could not sit nor remain five minutes in one place. I made my case known to a very moral young man on board. He replied, 'You must not give way so. Pray a little in the morning and at night; so come, John, cheer up, and help us sing "Poor Dog Tray."' 'O,' said I, 'shipmate, "Poor Dog Tray" can't give me any comfort now; "The arrows of the Almighty" are fast within me, and unless He restores my soul nothing else can.'"

But "*after the fire a still small voice.*" "I read the third chapter of John, sixteenth verse: 'God so loved the world that He gave

his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' Does that include me? Yes, I thought *whosoever* means me. I will venture on this love. I went by the mainmast in the middle watch of the night, and on my knees I earnestly pleaded the promises of God. I found pardon and grace. What joy filled my soul. I leaned over the anchor at the ship's side and having got a little hymn-book from one of the crew, I sang to myself those beautiful lines, —

"'My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for a child;
I will no longer fear.'"

From that hour his path was upward.

His sincerity was at once severely tested. He was greatly abused by wicked shipmates with derisive epithets and bodily injuries. "Wherever I went I met with mockery and scorn. One night my hammock was cut down and I fell across a large chest."

One evening while on watch, he overheard the following: "It is of no use to bother John Byrne any more. My father was a

Christian, and John has got the genuine thing, and you can't drive it out of him."

After that, persecution ceased. They listened to his appeals. "A young man, the son of a praying mother, came to me four days after and said he felt himself to be a wretched sinner. Soon we were in prayer together, and after some days of sorrow and anguish, the Lord removed the burden from his soul. I never saw so happy a young man. Never shall I forget that night when under the bow of the launch we knelt together and gave ourselves away to Him that loved us." He met this young man a few years afterwards in Great Britain, then a student for the ministry.

Four other cases of apparent conversion occurred on the voyage through his efforts. On reaching New York he took lodgings at the Sailors' Home in Cherry Street, and there talked and prayed with sailors every day in his own room. "Blessed be God, He blessed me there. When He makes up his jewels, many a dear sailor will look back with delight to that little room."

This was about ten months from his conversion, in March, 1856.

Surely his father's prayer had been wondrously answered. "God's own right hand, and His holy arm, had gotten Himself the Victory."

CHAPTER II.

Labors in the Service of the New York City Bible Society. — Failure of Health. — Visit to Ireland. — Usefulness in the Seaman's Hospital, Staten Island. — 1857 to 1859.

"How glorious is life thus consecrated
As the hallowed sphere of sacred duties
To our fellow-men."

MR. BYRNE was now fairly enlisted in Christian work and warfare, and seemed to have no hope, or aim, beyond that of winning souls to Christ, as his duty and delight, his joy and rejoicing.

Having obtained employment from the New York City Bible Society, as its agent among seamen in vessels and boarding-houses, he commenced at once a journal of each day's labors and incidents.

The following extracts from this journal will suffice to show the nature of the field and his efficiency in the work.

April 4th, 1857. On Monday next I go forth in the strength of my Lord and Master to sow the good seed. Lord, bless the humble

efforts of thy poor worm ; may I be faithful and bear the cross. The sufferings of my Incarnate Saviour will fire my heart and make obedience delightful.

Monday, April 6th. Visited some of the boarding-houses and conversed with some on the religion of Christ ; one seaman seemed serious and purchased a pocket Testament. Two sailors accompanied me to a meeting for prayer.

9th. I spent two hours this forenoon with a sailor reading the Scriptures, proving to him that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. How this poor soul did rage against the truth ! My heart went out to him in tender love. He replied at last : " Well, I believe there is something in Christianity that is yet a mystery to me."

20th. Precious time at my prayer-meeting this morning in the upper chamber. My room was crowded with sailors.

23d. Met two pious sailors. " O brother," replied one, " religion is our only comfort on the sea ; " and their happy countenances, beaming with joy, brought to my mind, —

" With Christ in the vessel, we smile at the storm."

27*th*. Spent an hour of refreshing to-day on board a schooner, with two pious sailors. We sang a few hymns together. The captain gazed at us with wonder.

29*th*. Seeing a dismasted ship, went on board. I thought there is some poor soul there who made vows to God as I often did, in the time of danger. And so it was. The second mate, an amiable young man, seemed to be impressed and was thankful for my kind counsel, and promised to think seriously of his salvation.

May 1*st*. Near a hundred sailors at the Home to-night. Conversed with several and went into their rooms, to speak with them. When I inquired if they had a Bible — poor souls — many of them would say, "Yes, sir, one my poor mother gave me."

May 3*d*. A glorious day. Another sailor under conviction. He was not going to Bethel to-day — clothes not being good. I soon fitted him out.

May 4*th*. The young man I referred to yesterday is, I trust, seeking the Lord.

May 8*th*. Letter from a Christian sailor comforts me much. Jesus is his comfort all the day long on the sea.

13*th*. Interesting young man; troubled conscience; turned to many broken cisterns; no rest; in California joined the Mormons; appointed an elder; still no peace; went again on the ocean. God's Spirit has followed him; had him in my room for prayer; poor prodigal, crying "Father, I am not worthy to be called thy son."

15*th*. Much cheered by the return of another dear brother from sea. Suffered much from his shipmates and the captain. One day when it was blowing hard, he sent him aloft when there was no occasion for it, endangering his life. The captain said to him, "I expected to hear you swear before you got through with that job." He replied, "Captain, I am a Christian and pray for those who despitefully use and persecute me." Called to visit a brother sailor very low in body; no desire to recover unless to do good to others. Blessed religion of Jesus, it smooths the dying pillow; and while I quoted that beautiful passage, "Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am," it filled his soul to overflowing.

22*d*. Felt much interested in a boy who spoke with me; could not read. He said, "I have a mother who prays."

23*d*. Met with five converted sailors in one boarding-house. We sang a hymn and had prayer together, — a season of refreshing.

24*th*. It is now after 11 P. M., and here is a poor sailor who has just knocked at my door. He is going to-morrow; wishes I would pray with him.

25*th*. The man who was with me last night came to take his leave. He came to the "Home," a poor miserable drunkard. He is leaving it, a child of God.

27*th*. At Boston. — Anniversary of Seaman's Friend Society. — Tried, in my weakness, to say something. — [Mr. Byrne attended this meeting by invitation. His statements are said to have made a very solemn impression.]

June 1*st*. Here is an old sailor bowing at the mercy-seat. The Lord called him on the sea. He enjoys sweet communion with his God, — near fifty years old.

2*d*. Conversed to-day with more than forty sailors.

8*th*. Conversed with several who like religion without a cross, but may God save me from such.

11*th*. Here are two poor sailors (½ past 10 P. M.) crying, "What shall I do to be saved?"

12*th*. These two souls, "Happy in the Lord," "First Love." — They know but little yet of the conflicts they have to meet.

13*th*. Another sailor under conviction. One sailor brother prayed. We sang, —

> "The dying thief rejoiced to see
> That fountain in his day."

He wept aloud. O, what I've felt at this moment as Jesus drew nigh and spoke peace, — and now he rises a new man in Christ Jesus.

17*th*. Two dear brethren who were converted at the Home last winter, returned from sea to-day, happy in the Lord. We had a sweet season of prayer together.

21*st*. Here is a poor soul in my room (½ past 10 P. M.) humbling himself before his God.

[Similar cases nearly every day at this time.]

30*th*. Is it the Lord's will that I should leave this work? — my poor body begins to sink. I can trust Him who feeds the sparrow and sustains the flower.

The limits of this volume admit only of the above extracts. The whole Journal, unabridged, would be a most impressive argument for redoubled exertions in this department of city missionary work.

The City Bible Society accepted Mr. Byrne's resignation with the following resolutions: —

"*Resolved*. That this Board has learned with deep regret, that in consequence of impaired health, the resignation of Mr. John Byrne, as one of our distributing agents, has been placed in the hands of the Marine Committee. And as he is about to return to his native land, we take pleasure in conveying to him in this manner our warmest assurances of personal esteem, and our earnest hope that he may be speedily restored to health, enabling him to continue for many years his earnest efforts for the salvation of that interesting class of our fel-

low-beings amongst whom God has hitherto so signally blessed his labors.

"*Resolved.* That the Corresponding Secretary be requested to furnish Mr. John Byrne a copy of the above resolution."

"Extracts from the Minutes.

"JAMES C. HOLDEN,

"*Recording Secretary.*"

On the 9th of July, 1857, Mr. Byrne left New York for a visit to his native country, with the ultimate design, if circumstances should permit, of becoming a lay missionary in India.

His immediate object was relaxation from labor, but the thought of being in any sense "off duty," seems never to have occurred to him. His zeal was not of that order; neither on the voyage nor in any places he visited did he neglect any opportunity of usefulness.

"I tried to sow the good seed on board, and being well supplied with books and tracts by Mr. Pearson, I was as busy as if I were in New York. . . . . I spoke to several of the sailors on the one thing needful, and got acquainted with three Christian

friends. We were enabled to sing the praise of our God, and held sweet communion together."

On his arrival in Liverpool, July 21st, he at once found his way to a Seamen's prayer-meeting. — "My heart was full and was strengthened to speak with freedom."

From Liverpool he went to Dublin, and from thence to his native home at the Lakes of Killarney.

"I went to see the grave of my dear parents. It was a solemn hour to me, while I remembered the pangs of sorrow I had caused that dear father by my base conduct.

"I shed a tear over his mouldering dust, and if his glorified spirit knows of the affairs of this wretched earth, what a burst of joy and praise must have filled his soul when angels witnessed my penitential sighs, and sang, —

"'A sinner saved by grace divine.'

"Having spent a week at the Lakes of Killarney, where I regained much strength, I was not idle, and many a tract and little book is scattered about these hills on the mountain side.

"I have been under the smartest doctor in Ireland, who says I will soon get strong again. . . . . My leg has caused me much pain, undergoing treatment. I am resigned to whatever comes, and cheerfully sing my favorite hymn, —

"'My remnant of days, I'll sing to His praise,' etc.

"I have seen four happily converted to God; one, a dear boy, who has gone home to the fold above to see the good Shepherd face to face; and another, a poor blind woman, with whom I spent many a precious season — an inmate of a poor-house, who is rich in faith. — 'Our hearts burn within us,' while we speak of that 'rest that remaineth for the people of God.'"

Having now no prospect of any further improvement in health, he returned to New York, and in December, 1858, was received as a patient in the "Retreat," a Seamen's Hospital on Staten Island.

A field of great usefulness was unexpectedly opened to him in this institution. The earnestness with which he engaged in it appears in the following extracts from letters:

"RETREAT HOSPITAL, *Dec.* 27, 1858.

"DEAR SISTER W., — I will just give you a return of the means of grace yesterday. Prayer-meeting from 2 to 3 P. M. Union prayer-meeting in the chapel. Christians from every denomination crowded in, until there was no room for them. To wind up the day, I went to the 'Old Ladies' Home' (an institution for the widows of seamen, near the hospital), at 6½ P. M., and had a meeting there, and while I sung 'We're going home,' many of these old souls seemed to rejoice greatly."

The following is from a lady who happened to meet Mr. Byrne at one of these visits to this "Widows' Home."

"While we were passing through the halls the voice of sacred song fell pleasantly upon our ear, and as we listened we heard the words, 'There's a home for us in heaven.' Brother 'Byrne,' a Christian sailor, now an invalid at the Retreat, was going from one sick-room to another, telling the suffering of the love of Jesus, praying with them, and making cheerful their sick-rooms with

the songs of Zion. As we followed in his steps we felt the influence of these heavenly communings, and I saw that those who had enjoyed them were calmer and happier, and many gave their testimony to the comforting influence of these interviews with the Christian sailor."

Nine sailors were at this time under deep religious impressions through his influence. "My ward is always resorted to. What can I do but point them to the bleeding Lamb? O, for more love and zeal in the blessed work."

The following are dated a few weeks later: —

"You will rejoice to learn the Lord wonderfully supported me on Sunday. . . . Several from outside — the doctors and others. I never felt so much of God's presence, and there were some tears shed. Two souls were awakened, and since then have given their hearts to God. Hallelujah to the Lord!

"O, my sister, live close to God; keep your mind stayed upon Jesus. . . . . As much as I love to visit my dear friends in

New York, I think I could suffer to be shut up in a lazar house so I could but lead a poor sinner to Jesus."

The blessed results of Mr. Byrne's influence in this hospital appear in the following communication from Dr. Moffat, the attending physician: —

"Mr. Byrne was under treatment for chronic inflammation of one of his knee joints. He was able to move about but little, yet with my consent, and with the concurrence of the inmates of the ward, he began to hold morning and evening worship. Some of the men in adjacent wards who were able to leave their beds, gathered around his bed as he read and expounded to them the Scriptures, and afterward knelt with them in prayer. The interest rapidly widened and deepened, and during his stay of over two weeks (at this time) it was strikingly manifest that a genuine work of the Spirit had commenced in connection with these meetings. Before he left the hospital quite a number evinced a deep concern for their souls, and a few professed to have found the Saviour. His departure

was much regretted by the large circle who were accustomed to assemble in his room. He thought his strength sufficiently restored to warrant his resuming his labors in the city. On the 18th of January he returned for further treatment, finding that his knee joint was still too weak for the work. He at once resumed his labors, and continued there up to the time of his final leaving the hospital, May 1st, 1859. He was accustomed to attend and take part in the chapel services three times a week, besides visiting the wards daily as his strength would allow. Of the amount of good which resulted from his labors, only the records of the judgment day can truthfully speak.

"The writer can confidently testify to the wonderful, all-pervading religious interest which manifested itself in every room of the building. The chapel services were crowded with attentive listeners, and many who went only out of idle curiosity, or worse still, only to mock, became stirred with new and strange feelings, which impelled them to go again and again. The Bible was read throughout the building as

it had never been read before; tracts and religious papers were in constant demand. A wave of blessed influences rolled over all minds, and for the time submerged all thought and feeling. Religion was the one theme of conversation. It was easy to talk on this subject to every one, for it seemed the most natural thing in the world to do so.

"Mr. Byrne impressed every one by his simple, unaffected earnestness. Whatever else his hearers might doubt, they could not doubt that at least he was sincere. His daily life testified that he felt and believed in all their power the truths which his lips declared, and this was itself a source of power for good which words can neither measure nor describe."

Mr. Byrne's health being sufficiently restored to admit of his resuming his missionary labors in New York, he left Staten Island for this purpose on the first of May, 1859, and about a month later became associated with myself, in the mission work of the Episcopal Floating Church for Seamen in New York.

The impressive reflection here presents itself, that all the spiritual life, and energy, and success described in this chapter were those of a *patient in a hospital.*

Thus is strength made perfect in weakness, and faithful labor made successful, "not by might nor by power," but by the Spirit of the Lord.

CHAPTER III.

Missionary Labors in connection with the Episcopal Floating Church for Seamen in New York. — 1859 to 1861.

"Blessed are they that sow beside all waters."

"Day after day, filled up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil."

THE floating "Church of our Saviour" at the foot of Pike Street, now replaced by a more commodious edifice, was at this time (1859) an unpretending structure, nearly hidden from view amid the forest of shipping, yet a place of much interest and importance, as the East River Station of the Episcopal Board of Missions to Seamen.

It is the custom at this church, at the close of the afternoon service, to invite to the front seats the men going to sea the following week, and give them religious books and a parting address.

It was often an impressive scene, at the close of a Sunday's services, to notice a number of seamen representing different nation-

alities, and bound to different parts of the world, leaving the church with a supply of books and tracts, through which the public teachings of the sanctuary would be followed up by the silent preaching of a Newton, a Doddridge, a Baxter, a Richmond and others on the solitude of the ocean, and in foreign ports.

In connection with Sailors' Homes and Reading Rooms in the vicinity, this was now the principal field of Mr. Byrne's labors.

To gather seamen to its services from the adjacent shipping and boarding-houses, and to follow up their impressions by conversation and prayer, was his chosen work. He had no higher earthly desire than to have health and strength for the discharge of its duties.

The nature and value of his services in this connection will appear in the following extracts from his Journal.

Having no *official* connection with the Board of Managers, it is inscribed, "Journal for 1859, for the information of the dear brethren who support me in this labor of love."

June 1*st*, 1859. Entered once more on my happy work in connection with a dear servant of God, Rev. Mr. H.[1] The last four months I've passed through many changing scenes, and yet how I ought to praise my God who provided for my every want.

One young man whom I spoke to last night, a complete wreck from rum, to-night signed the pledge; may it be the first step towards his long offended God. He seems truly penitent.

June 2*d*. This forenoon visited several vessels as far down as Old Slip. H. T., a sailor, deeply affected by the discourse, says he is determined to give his whole heart to God. . . . .

A sailor I spoke to while at the Retreat, an infidel then, stood up to-night to relate what God had done for his poor soul, and with a full heart said, pointing to me, "There, that is the man that faithfully

[1] Mr. Byrne's association with me, in this church, commenced at this date. I had never seen or heard of him before. I became pastor in May, 1859, and continued in charge until called to another field of labor in November, 1861. My lamented predecessor, the Rev. B. C. C. Parker, died in February, 1859. The Rev. Robert W. Lewis had charge from July, 1863, to February, 1872.

warned me to flee from the wrath to come." Blessed Master, to Thee be the glory. O my soul, be humble, and rejoice with trembling. . . . .

Happy work, winning jewels for my Master's diadem.

June 3*d*. Spent several hours this forenoon in visiting boarding-houses, conversing with seamen.

Long conversation with a sailor at the Home, in Cherry Street, this afternoon, who attended our Floating Church last Sabbath. Truly his soul is awakened to a sense of his danger.

Received two letters from sailors from a foreign port, converted about eight months ago, still pursuing the narrow way, and rejoicing in God their Saviour, desiring to be remembered in prayer at the church.

June 4*th*. Two souls hopefully converted. One young man, W. T., awakened to a sense of his danger last Sabbath at afternoon service. The other, E. K., was led to see his lost condition by my humble efforts, and often during the week met me for prayer. O! blessed Lord, help these lambs, and

carry them in thy arms. . . . . Visited a great deal to-day.

Sunday, *June 5th.* Early this morning went out to my work. A solemn service; the Lord's Supper administered; about forty partook of this blessed ordinance, with two sailors who gave their hearts to God the last week.

At the afternoon service about eighty sailors, I should suppose, present. The church well-nigh filled; a truly stirring sermon. . . . . Weary, very weary in my body, but not weary of my blessed Master's work. Praise the Lord for such a Sabbath.

June 6th. Several visits to-day from seamen in my room inquiring the way to Zion.

Visited by the sailor, W. T., mentioned on the 4th inst.; happy, very happy; he mentioned he was greatly strengthened at the communion at our Floating Church yesterday. . . . . Visited some boarding-houses, and a few vessels on the East River. . . . .

June 7th. Truly the Lord wonderfully sustained me to-day, and the whole of it has been filled up in the service of the good Master.

June 8th. At 8 A. M. left for Brooklyn Navy Yard, to visit the *North Carolina;* about five hundred seamen on board; remained over two hours conversing with the men. Met old shipmates; . . . . one remarked, "I thought your religion would wear out after a while," but I was able to prove to them that "the path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" one of them was deeply affected. . . . . At 6 P. M. went to the Home, Franklin Square. Rev. Mr. Walker delivered a beautiful address; the sailors solemn and attentive; this day filled up. O how happy! May the seed sown be watered from on high and bring forth fruit to the glory of my God.

June 9th. At 7 A. M. left for Staten Island; visited the different wards of the Institution, conversing with the poor sick sailors; tried to tell them in the most simple manner the story of the cross, and point them to the Friend of sinners; one poor soul deeply moved.

Truly the Lord sustained me this day most wonderfully: about ten hours on my feet.

June 10*th.* About 120 boarders here, many of whom visit me in my room from 2 to 3 daily. . . . . Fourteen letters to answer: mostly from sailors; cannot let them increase any more. Lord strengthen me.

June 11*th.* A day of rejoicing; seeing many inquiring the way to Zion. Left the Home at 9 A. M.; did not return till 7 P. M. Scattering the good seed; felt much of God's divine presence: therefore enabled to speak boldly to the poor mariners. . . . .

Sunday, *June* 12*th.* At ¼ to 8 went out to my work. . . . . Met a man-o'-war's man who looked miserable; my heart was pained to see such talents spent in the service of Satan. He seemed much affected as I told him what I had been, and what I am now by the grace of God. Asked him to come to our church; he came to each service; he wept under the sermon at 3 o'clock service, asked for a Bible, and signed the Temperance pledge.

Afternoon service. The church well filled. Some wet eyes; the poor sailors seemed to be fixed on the gracious words. . . . .

June 13*th.* Conversed with seamen who

were at worship at our Floating Church yesterday; a good impression made on many. O, that the Holy Spirit may deepen conviction. . . . .

A pressing call to visit a dying woman, unable to read her title clear (as once she could). The cares of this world led her away. I could only look and gaze and wonder that I have been kept by grace divine. Read God's word. Sung that beautiful hymn,

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed," etc.

Prayed, and my poor soul was melted as I pleaded the dying love of Christ. Never shall I forget that look, as she faintly said, "I'll see you no more on earth. O, continue to pray for me," which I did on my way home. O, my soul, be on thy guard; thou art still in the wilderness; may I hear the Saviour's voice, — Will ye also go away? O, my Jesus, to whom can a poor sinner go but to thee? . . . .

June 14*th*. Visited along the docks, and being pretty well known among the captains of vessels, have free access to the crews. . . . .

At 2 P. M. received the glad tidings that the poor sick woman I visited yesterday died, with a full assurance of her acceptance. Praise the Lord, O my soul, for this, whose mercy never fails.

June 15*th*. Visited in my room by the sailor, W. T., referred to on the 6th inst. He came to take his farewell. He is now going away on the ocean a new creature in Christ Jesus. I supplied him with some good reading. We knelt in prayer, while I gave him up to the care of Him who made me instrumental in doing him good. He wept like a child, and in giving the parting farewell, said, "I trust we shall meet again; if not on earth, in our Father's home above." He brought me a keepsake with his likeness. Lord guard thy lamb.

June 16*th*. At 8 A. M. a visit to my room from a sailor who once trusted the Lord was gracious, but in an unguarded hour gave way to his besetting sin of drunkenness. Alas! his cry now is "O that I were as in months gone by!" I spoke with him tenderly and prayed. Two P. M. Went down to visit the sick sailors at the

Retreat. . . . . In company with the Rev. Mr. H. held a service at the Widows' Home; truly this was a melting season. How much good done. . . . .

June 17*th.* Visited at the Home by a captain and mate — the captain a skeptic. Looked to the Lord for grace and strength, who enabled me to meet their foolish questions. The mate was truly convinced of the truth, and promised to call again; had prayer; never felt such pity for poor perishing souls; conversed with many to-day, and enabled to speak the truth in love. Poor souls, some of them were greatly moved. . . . .

June 18*th.* At 8 P. M. held our meeting at the "Sailors' Home," Cherry Street, for prayer and speaking. Many witnesses for Jesus' power on earth to forgive sins — mostly sailors. . . . . Another sailor under deep convictions.

Sunday, June 19*th.* Large congregation. Every eye seemed fixed on the preacher. Three P. M. a still larger congregation. The congregation was much affected. I could have shouted for joy.

June 20*th.* Several visits to my room from sailors to-day: they were inquiring about the way.

Six sailors at present in the Home earnestly seeking, I believe, for salvation. They are yet very shy — the fear of their shipmates, — but O! let them once taste the sweets of pardoning love, and they will then come out boldly on the Lord's side.

June 21*st.* A dying sailor in the Hospital sent for me. . . . .

Surely a man's sins will find him out. I never recollect seeing such agony of soul. Read the parable of the "Prodigal Son." He wept bitterly as I showed him the willingness of God to receive the poor returning sinner. With uplifted eyes and hands he cried, "Lord have mercy on me!" his poor afflicted wife, long a follower of Jesus, standing beside his dying bed in tears. We knelt in prayer, and never shall I forget the scene. . . . . Reaching his puny arm, he said, in tears, "God bless you, sir, for this visit."

I trust this is indeed a brand plucked from the burning. . . . . Spoke to some

more afflicted sailors and warned them to "flee from the wrath to come," and take refuge beneath the "Cross of Calvary." Truly thankful that I had given my heart to God before coming to a dying-bed. . . . .

June 22d. At 8 A. M. visited the *North Carolina*, Receiving Ship. . . . . About 150 sailors on board. . . . . Quite a crowd collected, and with God's help they heard a faithful warning to "flee from the wrath to come;" my poor heart was melted while I spoke of Jesus, the friend of the poor sailor. . . . .

June 23d and 24th. Accompanied Dr. M—— to the Retreat, where I attended the meeting; the chapel well filled with afflicted sailors. Addressed them for about twenty minutes, and had prayers; poor souls rejoiced to see me again; I never felt such freedom in speaking. I trust my visit has been profitable. Remained all night, and in the morning held a meeting at the Sailors' Widows' Home. . . . .

June 25th. One P. M. Saw my dear friend, Mr. U——; held a short but profitable conversation. He, too, is engaged in

the Master's work — both hand and purse. The Lord richly reward him.

Another sailor brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, came at a late hour to tell me.

Another week's journey nearer my Father's house; my wants are all supplied; food and raiment, with the smile of Heaven; truly mine is a goodly heritage.

Sunday, 26*th*. Forenoon service solemn and affecting. The Church begins to be awakened. Afternoon service, solemn warning: subject — "Rich man and Lazarus." Twenty-six sailors received good books. Three deeply impressed, after the service came to converse with me on the subject of the change of heart.

Monday, 27*th*. Glory to God. This is glorious. Another soul at my room crying, "What shall I do to be saved?" After a profitable conversation, with prayer, furnished him with a suitable book. He goes away to the ship to hear a different language. O that the God of Daniel may shut the lion's mouth, and guard this tender lamb! He says he will never forget

the sermon of yesterday. Ten P. M. O Lord, may this day promote thy glory — a knock at the door. Here come two of my children the Lord gave me in my weakness, — come to take a farewell. They leave at 6 in the morning — tried to be faithful to them in reminding them to stand up for Jesus.

Tuesday, 28*th*. Early this morning visited by a sailor, seeking hard after "the pearl of great price." Pointed him to the way and had prayer. Heat intense, yet I must work while yet it is called to-day. Visited through the shipping; found much to encourage. The aged sailor I visited last week passed away, with a witness of God's pardoning love. His last words were, "Blessed Jesus." Held my first meeting at the Mariners' House at 7½ P. M. Conducted the service after the form of the Episcopal Church. All seemed attentive. One lady present wept much.

Thursday, 29*th*. Confined my visits to the boarding-houses. A young sailor at our Home, just returned from sea, disabled for life by a fall, seems truly humble, and

is now seeking the truth. Two P. M. Sun very hot. Many sailors waiting for Bibles and Testaments.

Gave three Danes the Word of God.

Present at our Home in Franklin Square. Rev. Mr. W. conducted the service. Thank the Lord for such faithful ministers. My own soul was blest. Spoke with several sailors. One said, — I wish, sir, I had this religion.

30*th*. Visited the small vessels on the East River; conversed with the sailors. Half past three P. M. Met at the Home by seven young sailors, asking to hear more about the precious religion of Jesus.

Half past ten P. M. Weary in body, but joyous in prospect of the rest that remaineth.

The foregoing extracts are the *first thirty* of more than seven hundred similar entries of daily labor and experience, from June, 1859, to November, 1861.

They illustrate his fidelity and the importance of his field of labor.

Happy day for the Church, when for every such field, white for the harvest,

there shall be some such laborer to thrust in the sickle.

Mr. Bryne's usefulness during this period of his connection with the Floating Church, is further illustrated in letters like the following:

U. S. Navy Hospital, Norfolk, Va.
May 19*th*, 1860.

To Mr. Byrne, from a Sailor.

My dear Christian Friend, — I have taken this opportunity to let you know how grateful I feel towards you, for your affectionate earnestness in recommending me to put my full trust and confidence in our dear Lord and Saviour, and I assure you with the help of God, although I am very young, and but as a babe, as the Apostle refers it, I am determined to stand up for my blessed Master, and serve him while I sojourn here in this transitory and vanity fair world, and I do intend to lay hold of the Blessed Lord's promise as an anchor that is sure and steadfast.

My friend, I have reason to thank God that I became acquainted with you, for I can assure you that I never thought seriously

about my soul's salvation, until I received your kind and more than affectionate letter. I then saw that I had indeed a true and disinterested friend, and one that did care for my poor soul, and wish that it might be saved. I have been making an effort since I came here, to persuade a poor marine who is very sick, and not long for this world, to put his full trust in Jesus and he would be saved. . . . . He seems to take an interest, and often tells me to read the New Testament, and he listens with the greatest concern and thanks me for reading, and I hope through the blessing of God he will be saved. Pray for him and me, dear brethren. Remember me to all the Christian friends; tell them all to remember me in their prayers.

I remain your brother in Christ,

J. C.

Other equally interesting extracts from his correspondence at this time, will be found in the Appendix to this volume.

In the autumn of 1861, Mr. Byrne's health made it imperative that he should rest from labor.

He returned to Ireland, with the hope, as his health required a warmer climate, of becoming a lay missionary in India.

To the record of his usefulness contained in this chapter, illustrating impressively as it does the importance of lay missionary effort, it should be added, that the work in this field was not exclusively religious. He was active and efficient in relieving the poor. Memoranda of receipts and expenditures for a sewing-machine for some poor widow, or for clothing for the destitute, occur frequently in his account book, and he was greatly aided in this work by a few gentlemen who do not care to "let the left hand know what the right hand doeth."

One of them having playfully remarked on one occasion, "John, I think I must take a receipt for that money," he immediately wrote, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

He was not, however, a mere almoner of others bounty. He gave more liberally than all, according to his means. He denied himself for this purpose. When cautioned

against impoverishing himself, he appealed to the special promises of God to them who provide for the poor, and to strengthen his faith in such promises, hung over his table a little picture of Elijah fed by the ravens.

Such proofs of disinterested benevolence inspired great confidence, and increased his spiritual influence.

CHAPTER IV.

Loss of Health. — Visits and Labors in Ireland and California. — Resumption of Missionary Work in New York, in Connection with the Floating Church. — 1861 to 1866.

"The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

THE affliction of God's children seems often a mystery. The bud is bitter until it blossoms, which is not always "this side the garden wall."

In the present instance, however, the painful infirmity which seemed to demand the relinquishment of a much loved field of labor, and the removal, perhaps for life, to a warmer climate, proved for Mr. Byrne "an open door" for a time to a wider field of usefulness. Some presentiment of such a result appears in the following: —

"I seem a mystery to myself, but our God moves in a mysterious way, and though at times our pathway be strewn over with the rough stones of privation and sorrow, we

know that He who spared not His own son, but delivered Him up for us all, can in reality send us nothing but what is in truth a blessing."

He left New York in October, 1861, for a second visit to Ireland, and with the hope of becoming a lay missionary in India. His letters to London introduced him into a circle of congenial Christian friends, among whom he first became acquainted with Miss Clara Burt, a lady of kindred spirit, with whom about two years from this date, he was united in marriage.

"We talked on Indian Missions, but they candidly told me my delicate appearance was against me. At present all seems dark with regard to India. It would take an immense sum of money if I should defray my own expenses, but I am willing to go as a servant to any of the Lord's ministers."

After a short stay in London, he arrived in Ireland at a time of unusual religious interest.

"I only wonder and adore the goodness of my God in permitting me to lend a lifting hand with His honored servants here,

in pointing poor sinners to the bleeding Lamb." . . . . "At times I feel like a bruised reed. Last week I was present at fifteen meetings, the week before I travelled over seventy miles; from different small villages and towns the call is, 'Come over and help us.'" . . . . "I now see why I had to leave dear America."

He writes on this subject to a brother sailor: —

"TRALEE, *February 4th*, 1862.

"The glorious work goes on steady in Tralee. The meetings increase in interest. The ball-room last Tuesday night was filled, several standing, and over a hundred persons went away for want of room. I rejoice to say, dear Edward, I am trying to hold on my way, notwithstanding my many infirmities and sins. I am permitted to tread in the footsteps of the little flock, though lingering and in the rear.

"I returned last night after a tour of eleven days through the county, as far as Ballylongford, and Tarbert, and Sallowglen; and surely the Lord has done great things, for which my poor soul desires to love and

praise Him. At a meeting I held in a country place last Sunday, there were as many as three hundred persons present. It was a sight that angels rejoiced over; poor sinners in tears, and more than one found Christ that hour. Mr. S—— collected the sum of £52 among the rich brethren in Kerry for my support, to keep me with them, and, dear Ned, all without my knowledge; and when it was made known to me I assure you I was taken all aback. Will you not make an effort to come over? We will make one tour together. Don't mind the expense. The last pound I will share with you."

That brother sailor came, at this earnest request, and labored most faithfully with Mr. Byrne in this missionary tour. "Whenever he finished speaking I generally followed him. Many at the last day will rise up and call him blessed. I know of several awakened and converted through his instrumentality. You may be sure we had a glorious time of it. His brother is in the ministry, and I hope he will get him into the work here in Ireland."

A few months later (April, 1862) he left Liverpool for New York, intending to leave there immediately for San Francisco, in the hope of meeting relatives whom he had not seen for twenty-five years.

While unexpectedly detained in Liverpool, he received from some unknown quarter a draft on the Bank of England for £20.

"A token that my Father in heaven will not forsake me."

"My former situation in New York is to be kept open for me for six months. I don't expect to be absent more than four."

He writes from San Francisco: "The night before I arrived at Aspinwall, the heat was so intense I slept on deck, and next morning I could not stand on my feet. None but God, knows what I have suffered since then." His sisters and niece had removed from the city, one of them a thousand miles distant, and he thus found himself sick, suffering, and alone in a strange city.

"I found a dear brother the first night who directed me to another Christian family, where I stayed for about three weeks, and through their kind care and the use of

liniments, I was so far restored as to be able to go to the meeting. Last night I went in great pain and had to lean on two sailors." They who know what Christian sailors are, when fellowship in suffering, and faith in eternal things unite in weaning their hearts from things below, and lifting them to things above, can appreciate the following : —

" One night no less than eleven pious sailors came to see me, having heard of my arrival. Be assured we sang with glad hearts and voices together, —

> " ' We'll stand the storm, it won't be long;
> We'll anchor by and by.'

" I found a place as book-keeper in San Francisco, and I trust was enabled to do something for the poor sailor at the same time, as I conversed with hundreds of them on the subject ever dear to my heart. An ungodly man opposed my steps, as he was afraid it would frighten boarders away. I was constrained to reprove open blasphemy. One day he said, ' Put down ten dollars to G. W.'s account.' O, dear brother, were you to see me then, a crowd of sailors around the place, some ready to say, ' There's your

religious man.' I looked up to Jesus, who put words in my mouth, and I tell you so moved was I, to tears even, that the very enemies were constrained to say, 'This is a plan to injure that just man.' I turned round before all hands, and said, 'There, sir, are your books, and I pray God that this sin may not be laid to your charge.' I left, and went to work again from house to house, and although my poor limb is weak, I rejoice to say that I have not labored in vain. . . . . There is only one lay missionary in the city that I know of, — a converted sailor. How many precious hours we spend, in visiting the poor and afflicted in the Hospitals, beside seven meetings we attend every week.

"It would delight your heart to hear those dear sailor brethren witness for Jesus. With these dear brethren of brother Rowel's church, I have all things common. . . . . A dear sailor brother after being paid off from the U. S. Steamer *Seminole*, sent me a certificate of deposit for two hundred dollars.

"You would scarcely credit the number of letters I write every week — Ireland, Eng-

land, New York, Boston, Sandwich Islands, East Indies — the Lord helps me. Besides working in the Navy Hospital, and among the shipping and boarding-houses. Soon our work will be done. Hallelujah! Forever with the Lord. Your brother,

"BYRNE."

Extract of a Letter to J. C. H., Esq.

"Brought like ancient Israel, seeing no way of escape; then to stand still and see the salvation of God; — this is faith: and surely this has been my experience several times in California, and to-day I would hear my beloved Master saying unto me, 'When I sent you forth lacked ye anything?' Truly it is the language of my poor heart, 'Nothing, Lord.' I bless God my wants have been supplied, as far as food and raiment are concerned, and what is better than all, —

"'The smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.'

"And now sir, I would say here, I have seen all my relatives in this world. I have told them the precious truth that Jesus hath power on earth to forgive sins, and if

I get this voyage over, I trust my travelling days are at an end. . . . . May you ever enjoy the well grounded hope of a glorious inheritance in that better world, where mercy is unmixed with judgment and joy is undarkened by sorrow, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in Christian bonds,

"JOHN BYRNE."

He sailed on the 15th of March, 1862, and arrived in New York on the 6th of April.

"I was greatly blessed in my labors on board the steamer. I held services every Sabbath. Four precious souls gave their hearts to God. The second day after my arrival, the dear and old tried friends who supported me so long sent for me. It was a joyful meeting indeed.

"On the 18th of this month I commenced again the happy labor of telling poor sinners of Jesus' precious love. I have not felt better for years. . . . . My left leg I dread. The doctor pronounces it paralysis. I am surprised how much work the Lord still enables me to do."

His journal and letters FOR THE REMAINING FOUR YEARS of his life record substan-

tially the same daily round of prayer and labor as described in former chapters. In churches and prayer-meeting, in Homes and Hospitals, in the house and by the way, he was instant in season and out of season, comforting the sorrowing, helping the poor, warning the careless, and guiding the lost to the Saviour of their souls.

Health at last completely failed, and sentiments like the following became very natural, as the shadows of "life's evening" began to fall: —

"To Mrs. N——.

"Your sisterly kindness is freer than mine, but not so free as the sweet love of Jesus. . . . . Going up to the cars that evening, while waiting for the train I sang the hymn, —

"'I'm weary of loving what passes away,
The sweetest, the dearest, alas! do not stay;
I long for the land where those partings are o'er,
And death and the tomb shall divide hearts no more.'"

These longings were soon to be realized. The time of his departure was at hand. The next chapter records its solemn scenes and blessed experiences.

CHAPTER V.

Last Illness and Death. — 1867.

"At evening time there shall be light." — *Zech.* xiv. 7.

"The close of a good man's life is the evening of a beautiful day." — *Ancient Epitaph.*

THE evening of Mr. Byrne's life may be dated from July, 1866. He suffered severely at that time from his diseased knee. He was for some weeks confined to his room, and his general condition was premonitory of his approaching end. It was "evening time," but "there was light." At no time in his life did the power of his faith to sustain him in trial appear more remarkable. On the third of July he writes to his valued friend, J. C. H., Esq.:

. . . . "Dr. Moffat attended on me, and probed for a loose bone which was somewhere adrift in my knee, but found none.

"I cannot describe the pain I suffered; it is known to Him who bore our griefs and

carried our sorrows; whose grace enabled me to say, '*The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?*' It is precious, dear sir, when storms gather to find a refuge in the sympathies of a Saviour who did not chide Mary for her tears, and came Himself to weep over the sorrows of a ruined world. When the doctor saw my limb, he shook his head, as much as to say, 'You will have a hard time of it.' I must confess I felt for the moment somewhat cast down. I thought of the precious little hymn that ends with the words, '*Look aloft!*'

"O the sweet comfort I drew from the thought, I have God for my father, the angels for friends, and Jesus an *elder brother*. The pure homes in many hearts, too, are mine, dwellings dearer than all the friendship of the world."

He recovered sufficiently to resume his work. Friends advised quietness, but he said, "I served Satan so long, and have so small a remnant of life to devote to my new Master, that I must be faithful to the utmost."

His spirits became unusually buoyant. The mate of a vessel, for whose conversion he had made special effort, and whom he had brought to his own room for prayer, seemed to have found pardon and "peace in believing," while kneeling beside him. "Our home from that time seemed a consecrated spot."

The poetry he marked and copied at this time indicated joyous anticipations of heavenly rest. All this was perhaps what Bunyan describes as the Christian's "Land of Beulah;" but the "Dark River" was just beyond it. On the 21st of January Mr. Havemeyer received from him the following note: —

"MY DEAR SIR, — I am confined to my bed, and am unable to move my limb. I was out on Friday, and slipped, but did not fall. I wrenched the long afflicted joint. I did not think at the time that I would have suffered so much bodily pain since.

"Friday being my prayer-meeting, and Mr. Lewis being laid up with a sore throat, I thought I would lead as usual. At the

meeting it became painful, so much so I could not use it, and good brother Meade brought me home on his back. I have to be turned in the bed. And yet, dear sir, you will be glad to hear I am unusually happy. So much so that I have rejoiced when the pain was sharpest. I can rest calmly on Him who has been the dwelling place of his people in all generations."

"I called upon him," says Mr. H——, "on the 26th, and was surprised to find that his sufferings were intense, and when it became necessary to move him, they amounted to agony.

"He had been in this condition for about a fortnight, and had been almost without sleep. He was calm and pleasant notwithstanding, and had much to say of the unmerited mercy of God, and of his experience of strengthening grace. I called again, and finding his condition in no wise better, sent to him a competent surgeon, — Dr. Charles M. Allen of this city. The doctor made a careful examination, and as I have since learned, made up his mind fully that

the only hope was from amputation. It was gratifying to me that the doctor and Mr. Byrne inspired each other with mutual regard and confidence. The result of the interview was an arrangement between them, that he should be taken to the New York Hospital, three days afterwards, as I think on the first of February, it occurring providentially, that Dr. Allen's regular term for duty as Hospital Surgeon, commenced at that time.

"The day after his removal to the Hospital, I found three or four convalescent patients around him, to whom, notwithstanding his condition, he was speaking the truth in love."

It was said to him that some were Romanists and would not listen to him. He replied, "I must leave my mark." The Rev. Dr. Hall, of the Seamen's Friend Society, states: "One young man, since gone home to England, ascribed his conversion to the words he heard while lying on a cot next to him in the Hospital."

Dr. Moffat, his physician at the Retreat, thus describes his visit to him at this time:

"His sufferings at times were, in the last degree, excruciating; yet they seemed to extort from him nothing but constant songs of praise and thanksgiving. His trust never faltered; his patience never wearied. As he grew weaker, his faith, joy, and triumph of soul seemed to increase. Some Scripture cards were hanging near his bed, so that his eye might easily rest upon them. I shall never forget the unction with which he would repeat them, and then give his own exposition of them; they were indeed as a stout staff in his hand, as he descended the banks of the river of death. They were the nourishment upon which his soul fed; by them, he was lifted up so wonderfully, that the most intense bodily pain could not disturb his equanimity of spirit, or mar his profound peace and joy. He bade me good-bye with a heavenly smile, as one who might be going for a season to a distant land, with the expectation of seeing me again. His exhortation to Christian fidelity, and a closer walk with God, were most affecting. I left his couch with this one prayer melting in my heart,

'Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his.'"

The amputation was performed on the 8th of February.

Mr. Helland, a seamen's missionary, says: "His pastor, Rev. Mr. Lewis, came in, and after a few moments conversation, they both requested that I should pray that the Lord would give him strength to endure the operation. I left him ten minutes before the amputation. He was resigned to the will of God, but evidently it was a trial. He sank rapidly after it. None of the doctors thought he could live till morning. On the 11th I saw him again; when he saw me, he smiled and said, 'Brother Helland, I am nearing the harbor. I have strong confidence in Jesus. I leave it all with the Lord.'"

He said to another, "Ah, brother C——, what could I now do without Christ? He is my all. O, how precious! I am near home."

My own visits were at a time when his very low condition forbade much conversation. Knowing what he had been as an

associate in Christian labors, I was not surprised at the "perfect peace," with which he awaited his departure. His condition varied from day to day. Stimulants and opiates were necessary. "He several times alluded to the fact, that they so far hindered the operations of his mind, as to prevent the free and satisfactory communion with his Saviour which he desired, but he trusted in Him fully, and was assured of his presence." "He expressed himself as without ecstasy, but as having perfect peace." "On one occasion he spoke of his comparative clearness of mind, and of the refreshing season of prayer he had that morning enjoyed." At another time, a prominent trait in his character was strikingly shown. Learning that two men who had come to see him were suffering from want of employment, he at once concerned himself in their welfare, so far as to write notes to parties in their behalf, and thus actually procured them situations. Texts of Scripture, in the form called the "Silent Comforter," were hung on the screen over his cot. He would express the thoughts they suggested in such

words as these: "O what blessed promises!" "Glorious Saviour! this is my only hope." "I shall soon be with Jesus." "Poor unworthy sinner that I am, but the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin." At another time he remarked, "Why did I not go, I was so happy."

"I saw him for the last time," says Mr. Helland, "on the 18th of March. When he saw me he began to smile, and raising his arm and pointing his finger upward, he then told me an 'OLD FRIEND' had been to see him. I thought what a victory! Leg taken off, and on the borders of the grave! He then closed his eyes for some time; on opening them again and seeing me, he commenced to smile, and beckoned to me and took hold of my hand and said, 'I have got down to Jordan's flood;' then he commenced to repeat the following verses, which he learned from me in the Museum of the Sailors' Home: —

"'And when to Jordan's flood
We are come, we are come,
Jehovah rules the tide, and the waters He'll divide,
And the ransomed host shall shout
We are come, we are come.'

"He grew stronger and stronger as he was repeating the verse, and when he came to the last line he pressed my hand, and stretched himself on the bed, with an expression of triumph that I cannot describe. His dear wife and sister W—— were present. We stood weeping together, with mingled feelings of joy and grief."

The Rev. Mr. Whitehead, Chaplain of the Hospital, states: —

"There was a feeling of solemnity in the room, as though the minds of all were impressed with the idea, that there was a good man, a child of God lying very ill, and approaching his heavenly home. Often one and another would, with gentle step, come near his cot, and look at him with apparent tenderness, seeming to say: —

"'How blest the righteous when he dies.'

. . . . "His occasional fervent ejaculations and expressions of faith, love, and hope, and the brief song of praise, that now and then rose from his lips, shed a peculiar sacredness around his bedside, and made us feel that it was good to be there, and that a religion that can thus sustain the soul in

the hour of suffering, and the prospect of eternity, must be divine."

He said but little at the last. At one time, when his mind was wandering, he asked his wife for money, to give to some poor person he imagined to be near him.

His departure was very peaceful. Life ebbed slowly away, till he fell "asleep in Jesus," at 9 A. M., March 23d, 1867.

> "Thus Jesus slept — God's dying son
> Passed through the grave, and blest the bed;
> Rest here, blest saint, till from his throne
> The morning break, and pierce the shade."

Mr. Byrne's age was 49.

The period of his missionary labors was just eleven years, commencing on the *day of his conversion* at sea, March, '56, and ending only with his exhortations from his *death-bed* to fellow patients in the Hospital.

The funeral services were conducted in the large reading room of the Sailors' Home in Cherry Street, and at Greenwood Cemetery, where a suitable monument has been erected to his memory.

The services and addresses in the Reading Room, by the Rev. Mr. Lewis, his pastor,

the Rev. Mr. Walker, the Rev. Charles J. Jones, the Rev. Mr. Loomis, and myself as his former pastor, were attended by a large concourse of friends.

It was an occasion of holy solemnity, giving impressive emphasis to the words, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

CHAPTER VI.

"The memory of the just is blessed."

MIRACLES need attestation. The following tributes to our brother's memory attest the miracle of Grace which had made even of him a temple of the Spirit, and a Pillar of Testimony to the divine reality of the Gospel: —

REMINISCENCES BY REV. CHARLES J. JONES,[1]

Pastor of the Mariners' Church.

The duties of his field of labor and mine, as pastor of the Mariners' Church, threw us often into each others company, and whenever, on the busy sea of our heaving life, we crossed each others track, we were mutually sure of a friendly hail. In the

[1] The reminiscences in this chapter are but extracts from communications too lengthy to be published entire.

Old Slip and Fulton Street meetings, on board the *North Carolina*, along the wharves, in the Lecture Room, or in the prayer-meeting, John was always the same cheerful, affectionate, unselfish, and unsectarian brother. And often, how often! I have been comforted and encouraged by his clear, ringing, and hearty words of cheer, "Brother Jones" (I wish I could transcribe the words and accent), "the Lord is good. Bless the Lord, O my soul." And referring to some prayer-meeting, or religious privilege, we had shared together, he would say, "O, but we had a precious meeting; the Lord Jesus was there. Ah, my brother, He is always true to His promise. Glory be to God!"

His heart seemed to be always full of the love of God. He was a happy Christian, though seldom free, entirely, from bodily pain, and his happiness often found expression in song. He was a sweet singer in our Israel. He would frequently, when we met, break out into a stanza of one of our favorite hymns. If troubles and trials were the subject of our conversation, he would sing, —

"In heaven above where all is love
There'll be no more sorrow there."

Or if opposition to our work threw us into sympathy with each other, he would sing, —

"We'll stand the storm, it won't be long,
We'll anchor by and by."

Or if, as was sometimes the case, his own physical infirmities formed the topic of conversation, he would sing in his clear and sweet voice, —

"I'm a pilgrim, and I'm a stranger,
I can tarry, I can tarry but a night."

or, —

"My days are gliding swiftly by," etc

. . . . . .

'For O ! we stand on Jordan's strand,
Our friends are passing over ;
And just before, the shining shore,
We may almost discover."

And then his eye would light up with an almost unearthly brightness, as if he really saw already the shining ones ; and with a peculiar motion of his foot he would seem, in imagination, to be actually treading the golden strand.

John had a kind, sympathizing word for

everybody. His heart was never closed to the appeal for aid. The poor lost a friend when he was taken away. Sometimes he was deceived and taken in, and then he would weep — not over the money given, but over the degradation of soul of which such deceptions were the index.

He has often made the widow's heart to sing for joy as a result of his timely benefactions.

His religion never permitted him to be melancholy. He had cares; he had difficulties; he had afflictions and sorrows and causes for grief, but they were never known to stop his singing. He would, in his saddest hours, reveal the under-current of his joy, by singing, —

> "Let cares like a wild deluge come,
> And storms of sorrow fall," etc.

His life had its dark side, — as whose has not, — yet he was wont to look at its bright side, so that if he had not been a Christian, he might have been styled a "laughing philosopher."

No man could fail to appreciate the value of religion, as a comforter, who deduced his

opinions of it from the happy life and joyous experience of John Byrne.

He was unsparing in his labor and unselfish in his motives. He loved to do good, and like his Divine Master "went about" with that end in view. He asked not what men deserved, or of what creed they were, but what they needed. His spirit emphatically was a missionary spirit. At home or abroad, at sea or ashore, his desire was to win souls for his Master. To him every soul was unspeakably precious, and every one saved was a new gem in the diadem of his Redeemer's glory. . . . .

His was a filial soul. He loved to think of God as his Father, and therefore always went boldly to the throne of grace, and knocked at the door of heaven with the air of a child at his Father's house, where he expected a genial welcome, rather than with the timidity of the beggar who was uncertain of the nature of his reception. This will account in a large measure for his success in winning souls. For in this matter he was truly wise in the Bible sense (Prov. xi. 30). His ways were winning. "He

opened his mouth with wisdom, and in his tongue was the law of kindness." . . . .

REMINISCENCES BY REV. ROBERT W. LEWIS,

Minister of the Episcopal Floating Church for Seamen, New York.

My dear friend and brother John Byrne was first introduced to my acquaintance and friendship upon taking charge of the Floating Church of our Saviour, in July, 1863. From that time till he departed hence in the Lord, a very close and tender friendship prevailed between us. We saw each other almost daily. We met on the Lord's day, when he would be out at 8 o'clock engaged in his important duties of inviting men to the house of prayer: we met at the social evening service.

He has accompanied me again and again, to visit the sick, and we have been together at the graves of the departed. I married him to his wife; I baptized his children. I think I may say I have seen him in nearly all the relations of life. And now, after a calm observation of him, I can truly affirm that he was an unexampled man; he was one among

a thousand. No one, more than John Byrne, lived up to his Christian profession. No one tried to live closer to Jesus. He had a very humble opinion of himself, but was very charitable to others. With a deep sense of the value of the soul of man he never tired of pointing the attention of one here, and another there, to that precious Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world. His Christian character was a constant source of admiration and comfort to me, while his services as colporteur, in connection with the church and congregation where I serve, were invaluable.

Would there were more Christians like him; in his humility, in his zeal tempered with prudence, and in his love for the bodies and souls of men.

"Servant of God, well done,
Rest from thy loved employ."

REMINISCENCES BY THE REV. DR. HALL,

Corresponding Secretary of the Seamen's Friend Society.

To Mrs Byrne.

Dear Madam,—I feel quite sure that very

few lives achieve as great usefulness as did that of your lamented husband. Ever humble from a conscious unworthiness of it, the privilege of being a child of God he rejoiced in, and he talked and sang about it, like one born to the royalty and inheritance of heaven. It always brightened my own hope, and cheered me, to hear him speak of his relation to Christ; for his faith was so strong that the unseen Jesus seemed to be brought by it into constant companionship. And this it was, doubtless, that enabled him to go about as he did, and do so much wearisome physical service, for which I thought him disabled.

I was often touched by his gentleness, under the perplexing annoyances incident to his missionary service among his unsatisfied and sometimes dissatisfied poor. Even when those he had done his utmost to relieve, showed, if not ingratitude, at least, no proper gratitude for his laborious kindness, he was still patient with them, and sometimes most touchingly so.

I well remember once upon a time he came in to see me about a poor woman

whose case was exceedingly trying to him, and with tears, saying that he was afraid he had spoken too harshly when he told her he could do nothing more and that she must make some effort at helping herself.

In every sense, he was a friend to the poor, especially to the poor sailor, and to the widows and families of seamen; I never knew a man who combined so many of the qualities essential to doing these classes good.

REMINISCENCES BY J. C. HAVEMEYER, ESQ.,

A most intimate and valued Friend, and Supporter of Mr. Byrne in his Missionary Work.

I first became acquainted with Mr. Byrne in 1859, while attending a daily noon-day prayer-meeting at Old Slip.

He was a regular attendant, and in all his exercises was interesting, because hearty, deeply sympathetic and expressive in voice and manner. He was marked as no ordinary Christian man, whenever he participated in public religious services. In his simple spirit of service and love to God, it mattered not to him where he was, or how

many or how few were present. His public efforts were numerous. Scarcely a day passed during which he did not take charge of, or participate in, one or more prayer or temperance meetings, and not unfrequently he spoke at large public gatherings, for which his services had been secured. His life was very systematic, and he was a busy man, but never in a hurry. To one who has not learned by experience, how much regular earnest effort will accomplish, his work would seem surprising. He had a fixed labor for every day, which was his first care. At a particular hour he went to the Sailors' Home, to talk with sailors, and to give reading matter to those going on voyages. During a certain part of the day he visited Sailor Boarding-houses. During a portion of several days in the week he visited the poor, and he had not over one evening in the week, and latterly I think not this, without a stated engagement. On one regular day, he went to a Sailors' Hospital at Staten Island. Latterly he distributed libraries for the Seamens' Friend Society, in addition to his other work. He

was continually looking after special cases brought to his notice, and his friends well remember how frequently he spent many hours in raising money to buy a sewing-machine for some poor widow, or to send some unfortunate one to a distant home.

He also solicited money from particular friends, for specially deserving cases, and was accustomed to render each one a complete statement of the expenditure, made up in his usual neat style; if he had engagements he was punctual, usually arriving in advance of the time. His considerable correspondence was kept up, I think, mostly at night after returning from his meetings, or before going to them. He wrote a great many letters, and was constantly receiving them from all parts of the world.

I have seen him in the homes of the sick. He had the faculty of uttering clearly and earnestly the truths that seemed appropriate, and after prayer was ready to go, having fulfilled his mission.

He was extremely guarded in expressing unfavorable opinions, and about indulging in harsh criticisms of other people.

By his usual economy, in which he was well seconded by his wife, he was enabled to live comfortably, dress respectably (which he always did), and to give to the poor, when his sympathies were called forth.

His spirituality is shown by the fact that, though he availed himself of every opportunity to speak and pray, he did not produce the impression of being obtrusive; every one felt that Christ spoke through him. I once referred to the difficulty I sometimes experienced in speaking publicly of divine things. His reply was, "I just open my mouth and God fills it." Habitually modest and respectful, accustomed to mortify self, seeking not the praise of men but the praise of God, seeking the souls of men and not to be commended by men, and relying fully upon Divine aid, how could he fail to appear as a messenger from God?

Some interesting incidents selected from Mr. Havemeyer's reminiscences, will be found in the Appendix.

REMINISCENCES BY THE LATE DR. MOFFAT,

Of the "Retreat" Hospital, Staten Island.

He was always humble and distrustful of himself. He had no religion to boast of. His sense of his own unworthiness was deep and radical, yet of the high praises of his Redeemer his heart seemed ever full and overrunning. He was almost constantly breaking out with snatches of devout poetry. He loved singing, and seemed wonderfully lifted up by it. Between the stanzas, he would lift up his soul in such ejaculations as "Bless the Lord," "Hallelujah to the Lamb," etc., etc. It was heaven begun on earth to sing with him, and catch his spirit. Never have I known such exultation of soul as he evinced, while the praises of his Saviour were being sung. Yet he was not always on the mount; he sometimes walked with bowed head and tear-suffused eyes, in the valley of humiliation. He mourned over his own short-comings, and bewailed the hardness of his heart, which he wondered at, when he remembered the amazing grace and love of the

great Redeemer. His love for the brethren was ardent and outgushing. His hand was ever open and outstretched to succor and relieve the poor and friendless. He seemed to care nothing for money, except to bestow it where he thought it might do good. . . . .

REMINISCENCES BY A SAILOR.

On our arrival in New York, we went to board with sister W——. O! what a happy little family were we, often talking to one another of the goodness and mercy of God our Saviour to us, often singing praise together to Him who had washed us, and redeemed us from our sins, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and after the day was spent, brother Byrne would gather the little flock around him, and after reading a portion of God's Holy Word, he would offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, our Heavenly Father, for us all, commending us to God, and asking the Lord to keep us from the evil in the world.

Blessed Jesus, help me to be faithful as thy servant John Byrne.

FROM ANOTHER SAILOR.

One feature of his character very deeply impressed me. It was the peculiar gift of introducing Christ in all his conversations without any apparent effort to do so, and without giving offense to any. I have heard people make use of sacred names and with earnestness too, but they soon were looked on as slaves to religion, or set down as bores, but not so with him; his love to Christ manifested itself so consistently, that it seemed his "native air," and was as natural as his respiration. If you pointed to that splendid ship, he drifted with you and it into the boundless ocean of God's mercy; you pointed to that house, and, with no apparent digression from the subject, you found yourself looking to the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; this was his peculiar gift, and it was exercised to such good purpose, that the inmates of the house were in constant contemplation of the matchless love that snatched him as a brand from the burning.

Dear sir, I wish I could tell John Byrne's

whole history. My acquaintance with him has been very sweet and profitable to myself, but frequently interrupted; what I have endeavored to describe is a beautiful living panorama, requiring thousands of writers to picture; at crevices here and there I have witnessed its beauty as it passed, for his was not the spirit to boast and parade his goodness; only those who were the recipients of it could tell its exact shape, for no other heard it from him; his life was a life of usefulness, his death was the death of the righteous.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

"Though dead they speak in reason's ear,
And in example live."

MANY Christians may be as remarkable for piety and usefulness as was John Byrne, yet few probably have ever attained to such a height from such a depth.

His case seems one of those monuments of grace which are divinely raised up from time to time, as pillars of testimony to the excellence of true religion, and are the most effective of all arguments to convince the skeptical and encourage the believer.

TO THE SKEPTICAL

It presents this appeal. Look on John Byrne, walking into the sea in India, to the brink of suicide and perdition, imprisoned as a vagrant in this country, wandering from place to place a piece of walking misery to

whom life was a burden; and then look on him after conversion, happy in God, a light and a blessing every day of his life to the sinful and suffering, and at last entering into rest in all the triumphs of Christian faith; and tell us how a moral transformation so amazing can be accounted for, except on the principle that the conversion of the soul is a divine reality, and the gospel of Christ "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

TO THE WEAK IN FAITH,

Walking in darkness, discouraged by their own experiences and the inconsistencies of others, and tempted to persuade themselves that all vital godliness of the New Testament standard is wholly unattainable in this age, our brother's example is a standing rebuke and a light in this darkness, by its exhibition of the "power of godliness" as a *living reality*.

He had contended with greater spiritual difficulties than most Christians; his case was one of those in which the power of old habits and associations make an upward path

more difficult; and yet it may be said that whatever shortcomings from his own ideal of Christian perfection caused him to walk, as one says he sometimes did, "with bowed head, and tear-suffused eyes, in the valley of humiliation," he attained, nevertheless, a high order of well balanced holy character.

A great excellence of his piety, was its symmetry. His faith, hope, and love seemed to exist in due proportion, and his heavenly-mindedness seemed the natural consequence and counterpoise of the toils and cross-bearings of his earthly condition. He "lived soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world, looking for that Blessed Hope."

This is much to say, but it may be said of our sainted brother, not for eulogy, but in rebuke of worldliness and unbelief, and in praise of that grace which is ever ready to work the same wonders of grace in every believer, who will live by the same appropriating faith in a "*Living Christ*," and cultivate the same entire consecration to His service, as his ruling principle and master passion.

Mr. Byrne's success in his work strikingly illustrates the principle, —

It speaks trumpet-tongued to all idlers in the Vineyard. Surely if anything ought to awaken the slothful servant to life and energy, it is the example of this humble man of God, going about doing good, even when a limping cripple, "in weariness and painfulness," and even warning and exhorting his fellow-patients from his dying bed.

The blessed privilege of winning souls is not confined to an educated ministry. Those gracious words, "I pray for them who shall believe on me through their word," do not apply exclusively to public preachers; such lights in the world as Headly Vicars, Harlan Page, the Haldanes of Scotland, John Byrne, and thousands like them, were not educated theologians. Knowledge is power, yet little knowledge with this power of godliness, is more effective than much knowledge without it. The power that can flash a message across an ocean, and "the excellency of the power" that can send the message of the Gospel effectually into a human soul, are alike of God, and not of man; yet

man may work the *machinery*, so to speak, through which this power is exerted. The "earthen vessel" can "hold forth the word of life," and he has the promise of Divine coöperation in doing it. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One," is the secret of his success. That affectionate earnestness of manner, united with cheerfulness and humility which are so natural to one "baptized of the Spirit," and intent on the saving of souls, give a power to his humblest efforts that can never be attained by the mere wisdom of words. Yet is there a wisdom and skill in the use of this power which every Christian ought to cultivate.

The ability of addressing even a Sunday-school effectively, or of directing ordinary conversation into a spiritual channel, is a great attainment.

"I thank God," says the Apostle, "that ye are enriched by Him in all utterance."

It adds immensely to one's happiness as well as usefulness. It made Mr. Byrne in many cases a great comfort to the sorrowing, a light to the benighted, and a guide of souls to the Saviour. Tact, prudence, readiness

of expression, and a command of illustration and anecdote, are of course desirable, and are constantly improved by practice; and when the practice becomes a habit of life, it makes the Christian not only an agreeable companion and a valued friend, but in the course of his life a "preacher of righteousness" in a private way to thousands of souls.—It tells on Eternity, and Eternity alone can reveal its exceeding great rewards.

Mr. Byrne's example is therefore an urgent plea for more

LAY PREACHERS TO THE MASSES.

If our brother had (as he used to say) but one talent, then are there ten thousand John Byrnes in the Church, and as many fields white to the harvest that wait their coming; and our brother's example is a solemn appeal to the consciences of all such to consider prayerfully the question whether they are not called to choose the occupation of the lay missionary as *the chief business of life.*

What other calling, next to the sacred ministry, promises a higher combination of dignity, usefulness, and happiness?

How can that importunate cry that comes up every day so affectingly from prisons and hospitals, and other places of sin and sorrow — O, for some Barnabas or Dorcas to come to us with the waters of life! — be responded to so effectively, and how can the harvest fields of city missionary labor be reaped so successfully, as by those young men and women in the Church, who may be led to devote themselves to this work in our brother's spirit of consecration (under proper authority and leadership), as their chosen calling and profession.

The establishment of training schools for this purpose promises great blessings to the churches. May "The Lord give the word, and great be the company of the preachers."

Such a general enlistment of lay agency in missionary work would inevitably tend to greater

UNITY AMONG CHRISTIANS.

How small from such a holy height would appear the fences in the valley below, which divide Ephraim from Judah,

and Judah from Ephraim "The bond of peace, with which God is binding all hearts into union with Jesus, will become stronger and brighter, in proportion to the coöperation of all hearts and hands in the gracious work of caring for the sick, the outcast, the fatherless, the stranger, and the widow. The sharp outlines of personal or partisan theories become dim as they are looked upon through eyes filled with tears of loving sympathy for our poor and afflicted brothers, and the asperity of theological discussion parts with its ruggedness, when bathed in the warm sunlight which encompasses those sons of God who see Jesus, and daily draw nigh to Him in works of mercy to the least of his brethren."[1]

Mr. Byrne's missionary zeal appeals most directly

TO CHRISTIAN SAILORS.

The peculiar characteristics of seamen, —

"Their generous spirit, their contempt of danger,
Their firmness in the gale, the wreck, the strife," —

are generally found, when consecrated to

[1] Bishop Odenheimer.

the love and service of God, to be eminently efficient in missionary work.

A single Bethel ship in New York (Scandinavian) had, a few years since, sent out twenty-six men into the city mission field; and even such men as the Rev. John Newton, among the fruits of whose ministry were the Rev. Dr. Scott the commentator, Cowper the Poet, and Buchanan the missionary; and Captain Wilson, the pioneer of Sandwich Island Evangelization, were converted sailors.[1] Seamen often speak several languages, and being generally regarded on heathen shores as representatives of the average morality among Christian nations, they leave impressions which must greatly aid or greatly hinder all foreign missionary work.

These are weighty considerations, that call upon Christian sailors especially to be "up and doing" for the conversion of their fellow-seamen."

Usefulness in this field can never be measured by such results as are direct and immediate. The smallest success may

[1] Rev. Charles J. Jones.

prove a power and a leaven, working onward in ever widening circles to results far exceeding original aims.

Mr. Byrne never perhaps undertook any one service so far-reaching in its consequences, as was his endeavor to awaken a religious interest among the six hundred seamen of the receiving ship *North Carolina*, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, of whom only four appeared to be truly Christian men. Beginning with these four, and urging them to all possible faithfulness in prayer, example, and effort, he presented their case the next day at a religious meeting in the city, with an earnestness that left a very solemn impression. The interest thus enlisted in connection with prayer-meetings and religious reading in the ship, resulted, in the course of a few months, in the hopeful conversion of one hundred and thirty-five seamen, who were apportioned, at their own earnest request, in companies of *twelve* each, to vessels going to sea.

They who know what Christian sailors are, in the ardor of their first consecration, will not wonder at the fact, that nine of

these vessels were heard from in less than two years, as having been visited with the influences of the Holy Spirit, to the saving of souls.

What an appeal to thee, Christian sailor, to "sow beside all waters." As well attempt to trace the silent influence of rain and dew-drops through all nature's chemistry, up to the golden grain of the harvest, as to trace the secret workings of thy feeblest endeavors in thy Saviour's service.

The influence here narrated must be still at work, and thousands of souls may appear at the final harvest, as the results of the humble faith in which John Byrne first "cast *this* bread on the waters."

In conclusion, our brother's whole history is especially impressive as an

APPEAL TO THE UNCONVERTED.

Those gracious words he so often made effective for others good, —

> "Amazing grace! immense and free,
> For O, my God! it found out me," —

he, "though dead, still speaketh" for the

encouragement of every prodigal wanderer from God, rebuking all sinful unbelief, and making impressive the assurance, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

"It found out me, let it find out thee," is now his voice from heaven; his "light in the window for thee, brother," sending its beams through all the storm and shipwreck of thy fallen state, inviting thee home, and assuring thee of welcome.

See the shining heavenward pathway in his own blessed experiences, — his

"Footprints on the sands of time."

They lead from *Wreck to Rescue*, from sin to salvation, from the "horrible pit" to the ROCK OF AGES.

APPENDIX.

LETTERS AND INCIDENTS.

TO THE PASTOR OF THE FLOATING CHURCH.

REV. AND DEAR SIR, — . . . . I thank God that ever in His good providence I was led to hear the truth as it is in Jesus.

My time now is too limited to give you any account of my history. The parable of the prodigal will say much for me, and I must add that quite unexpectedly you led me to the foot of the cross, represented again the sufferings and death of Him who despised not the shame, and in looking at that sacrifice I seem to have lost myself in Him. Strange that after looking and seeking for happiness so many years, I should at last find peace here in a strange city; but I have wandered and strayed from the right way like a lost sheep.

Your ministration reminded me so very much of my dear departed father, I could seem to see him again before me. May you be long spared

to represent Jesus in all his loveliness. He is the only friend we need. If poor sinners only knew what a blessed Saviour, what a friend, what a Jesus Christ He really is, they would love Him.

I remain yours very sincerely,

TO MR. BYRNE, FROM A SAILOR.

I am still pressing on by God's help. Although *alone*, still He is ever present, and that to bless me. O, what a comfort it is to think that I am preserved to this time, that I am still on praying ground and pleading terms with my dear Saviour. How precious does my Lord appear, now that I am alone (meaning the only pious seaman on board).

FROM A SAILOR WHO, AFTER REMAINING TWO YEARS ON SHORE, RETURNED TO SEA AS A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE, WITH A VIEW TO USEFULNESS AMONG SEAMEN.

God in his infinite mercy has seen fit to call me from nature's darkness into his great and marvelous light, and my lot thus far has indeed been cast in pleasant places, and by His grace sustaining me I have thus far been permitted to walk in newness of life. I am going out once more on Old Ocean to battle with Satan and his emissa-

ries, and this my earnest request is, that you would make mention of me in your prayers, that God may give me strength and wisdom from on high, that I may let my light so shine that my shipmates may be led to see the truth as it is in Jesus, and thereby glorify my Father which is in heaven.

Pray for me brethren. I remain,

Your affectionate younger brother in Christ,

J. M. C.

TO MRS. H——S.

N. Y. *August 12th*, 1859, 11½ P. M.

DEAR MADAM, —I thought to prepare a little article according to promise, and just as I began I heard a knock at my door, and rose to open, and before me stands a strange face. It is a sailor, who hands me a letter from San Francisco, and introducing the stranger as a beloved brother in Christ. We are soon acquainted, as he speaks the language of Canaan. O, that you were listening to the relation of his conversion. The good brother, whose letter I send you, is his spiritual father in Christ. O, how low this precious soul was once sunk in vice and wretchedness; but now see his face beaming with the love of Jesus.

If due means were used by proper persons to

invite the sailor, our Bethels would be filled with seamen joyfully listening to the glad tidings of life and immortality. There are not enough colporteurs employed in this glorious work. O that the Lord would raise up men of influence and noble hearts, to whom he has given much of this world's goods; such men as the four who have supported me for the last twelve months, and who have been repaid in seeing eleven souls brought into the fold of Christ, two of whom have passed away to the fold above.

Believe me, a sailor's friend, B.

THE FOLLOWING, TO A BROTHER SAILOR OF KINDRED SPIRIT, ILLUSTRATES THE PIETY AND FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN SEAMEN.

TO MR. E—— D—— (*a brother sailor*).

NEW YORK, *April* 12, 1861.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST, — Your welcome letter of the 26th of March came to hand. I need scarcely say I was rejoiced to hear you were well, and still looking to Him whose favor is better than life; go on, dear Ned; soon we shall reap, if we faint not. You have learned there is nothing really worth living for, but to realize that we have an interest in Christ. You have, my

dear brother, put your hand to the plough; O, never look back. You will be sorry to hear that I have been suffering from a severe cough and pain in my chest. The Doctor advises a change of air; but alas! where can I go? I can only lay back in my old arm-chair, and rehearse my old but favorite ditty, —

"No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in the wilderness;
A poor wayfaring man
I lodge awhile in tents below,
And gladly wander to and fro
Till I my Canaan gain."

I think at times my work is nigh done, and I am nigh home.

I need not say, my dear *Ed.* pray for me: I know you do, and how *often* lately have I longed to see you once more. I must content myself by taking down from the mantlepiece your likeness, and, lifting my heart to God, say, Lord bless my brother. Our meetings at the Home are increasing in interest, and a heavenly influence rests upon us; truly the Lord of Hosts is with us; and though I may be called soon to give up, my dear Lord is able to raise up far more and better men than I, to take my place at the Home. I hope you may have a happy time during your visit home, and may your walk and conversation glo-

rify our Father in heaven. Your letter I read at Old Slip; the dear brethren were rejoiced, and fervent prayer offered for you. What more can I say, dear brother, but this: Stand up for Jesus, live near Him, watch unto prayer, in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will bring you through all the storms of life, where the weary shall forever rest. Kind love to inquiring friends. Hoping soon to see you again, if not in the flesh, here's my heart and hand to meet you in Jerusalem, my happy home. Write again before you leave Ireland. It does me good to have a line from you. Brothers R. and J. and W. and others send love to you. I remain

Yours, till glory,

JOHN BYRNE.

INCIDENTS FURNISHED BY ONE OF MR. B.'S FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS.

Mr. Byrne once went into one of the resorts of drunkards and vile men. The bar-keeper could not help admiring his courage, and expressed surprise that he should dare to venture into such places on such an errand. "Of whom should I be afraid?" innocently inquired Byrne. "Why, of these men that come in." "O no," he rejoined; "I am sent." "Who sends you, pray?"

"My heavenly Father, and He will not allow any one to hurt me."

While speaking of God's wonderful kindness and protection, he told me this incident. He entered the bar-room of a Sailors' Boarding-house, having the usual supply of religious reading matter, when he was fiercely set upon by a half-drunken sailor who denounced him as a Protestant. The proprietor was at the time behind the bar, and though a Roman Catholic, upon discovering Byrne's danger immediately came to the rescue, and declared that no man should ever injure Byrne.

A woman had a sick husband, of infidel views, and possessing a violent temper. According to a previous arrangement, Byrne called at a fixed hour one day, and opened the door, which had been purposely left unlocked, the wife being out at the time. He quietly commenced a general conversation. The sick man was ugly, and inquired who he was. He told him he was a poor sailor who had come to see if he could do something for him. The answer was that he could do nothing, and he was requested to leave. Byrne quietly persisted that he might send him some jelly or soup, or something that he would relish. But he was steadily repulsed. He then said perhaps he might do something for his soul,

at which the carnal mind rose to frenzy, and the man demanded his instant departure. But he told him he must pray with him before leaving, and knelt and offered most earnest supplication to the God of all grace. At first the helpless invalid raged, but as Byrne warmed in prayer, his violence was checked, and he became sullen. In relating the incident, Byrne used to say that when he began to pray he could not avoid seeing in imagination a broom-stick descending upon his head, but as he became more engaged all fear vanished, and he had perfect liberty. He called again; the result of his interviews was a converted soul.

Having a very sick friend whom consumption had marked for a victim, and for whose spiritual welfare I was much concerned, I sent for Mr. Byrne to accompany me upon a visit.

My friend was staying with a relative, at an elegant country seat upon the banks of the Hudson. We took dinner, and an opportunity was afterwards afforded for a private interview with the sick man. Mr. G. avoided direct religious conversation, and in an animated way went on to explain that disease is a violation of natural laws, and that by doing certain things he expected to restore his health, etc.

Byrne listened respectfully, and with a very

pleasant face, now and then saying a word suitable to the general current of conversation. But finally some sentiment my friend uttered gave him an opportunity of relating an anecdote which he used most skillfully to give the conversation a directly religious bearing, when, with clearness and wisdom, he set forth the truth as it is in Jesus, enforcing it by his own experience. Before leaving, the family were assembled, and he offered a prayer, the impression of which I presume those who heard it will never forget. How scriptural, earnest, simple, direct, and appropriate it was.

The gentleman was quite overcome at parting, and from the hope expressed in his subsequent letters and conversation, there is strong reason to trust that he "sold all that he had, and bought the pearl of great price."

Many interesting incidents and letters are omitted for the sake of the brevity desirable in a volume of this nature.

THE END.

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